

County of Mercer

Division of Public Health



Healthy Homes

For a Healthier Community



Influenza Guidebook for Families

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A Message from the Health Officer

Good public health begins at home. Parents and guardians play an important role in preventing disease, such as influenza, which also is called the flu. By practicing healthy habits within your home, you can build a healthier community.

It is important to promote and demonstrate healthy habits. Through instruction and observation, children can learn ways to keep themselves, their friends and their families healthy. Some healthy habits include:

- Washing your hands often.
- Covering your coughs and sneezes.
- Staying home when you are sick.

This document will provide guidance on disease prevention at home. You can use the information in this guidebook to acquire knowledge about seasonal and pandemic influenza, and share that knowledge with your family.

Sincerely,

Sharon McNellis-Kissel
Health Officer
Mercer County Division of Public Health



Is it a Cold or the Flu?

Common colds and the flu are respiratory illnesses, but they are caused by different viruses. Based on symptoms alone, it may be difficult to tell the difference between the two.

Symptoms	Cold	Flu
Fever	Rare	Yes, often high with a temperature of 100° or higher
Headache	Rare	Yes
Aches/pains	Mild	Usual
Fatigue/weakness	Mild	Yes
Stuffy nose	Common	Sometimes
Sneezing	Common	Sometimes
Sore throat	Common	Sometimes
Cough	Mild hacking cough	Common

Source: New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services

It is not easy to identify the flu from other infections on the basis of symptoms alone. A doctor's exam is needed to tell whether you have developed the flu. If you develop flu-like symptoms and are worried about your illness, you should call your doctor.



An Important Message for our Communities from the Mercer County Division of Public Health

Four ways to prevent and control the spread of the flu:

- 1. Cover your coughs and sneezes.**



- 2. Wash your hands often.**



- 3. Stay home if you feel sick.**



- 4. Get a flu shot.**



Help Prevent the Flu

Know the symptoms of flu

- Fever (usually high)
- Headache
- Extreme tiredness
- Dry cough
- Sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Muscle aches



Practice Good Health Habits

- Wash your hands often with soap and water.
- Cover your coughs and sneezes.
- Try not to touch your eyes, nose or mouth.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home when you are sick.



Other Healthy Habits

- Get plenty of sleep.
- Be physically active.
- Manage your stress.
- Drink plenty of water.
- Eat healthy foods.



Antiviral Drugs

- There are antiviral drugs to treat and prevent the flu.
- These drugs must be prescribed by a doctor and should be started within two days of getting sick.



Novel H1N1 Flu Tips for Parents

Talk to your child about novel H1N1 flu.

- Ask your child what he or she heard about novel H1N1 flu.
- Give open and honest answers to questions.
- Speak at a level that he or she can understand.

Allow your child to express his or her feelings.

- Let him or her know it is OK to be scared or angry.
- Ask what he or she has heard about H1N1 so you can help him or her cope with feelings.

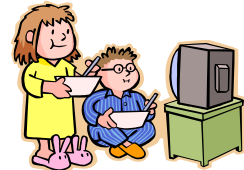


Children always need to feel safe and loved.

- When children are scared or unsure, they may need more care.

Limit what your child watches on TV and hears during adult conversations about novel H1N1 flu.

- Watch TV with your child, and answer his or her questions about what he or she has heard.



Practice healthy behaviors.

- Wash hands.
- Cover coughs and sneezes.
- Stay home if you are sick.
- Stay away from people who are sick.
- Eat well.
- Sleep well.
- Play outside.



Be a good role model.

- Maintain a calm attitude.
- Be sure to set a good example by practicing healthy behaviors.

RESOURCES

Influenza, Emergency Preparedness and Other Useful Web Sites for Parents

International

World Health Organization

<http://www.who.int/en/>

<http://www.who.int/topics/influenza/en/>

<http://www.who.int/csr/disease/swineflu/en/index.html>

World Organization for Animal Health (OIE)

http://www.oie.int/eng/info_ev/en_AI_avianinfluenza.htm

Federal Government

United States Department of Education

<http://www.ed.gov>

<http://www.ed.gov/admins/lead/safety/emergencyplan/pandemic/index.html>

United States Department of Health and Human Services

<http://www.hhs.gov>

<http://www.hhs.gov/disasters/emergency/manmadedisasters/panflu/pandemicflu.html>

<http://www.hhs.gov/pandemicflu/>

<http://www.pandemicflu.gov>

<http://www.pandemicflu.gov/plan/school/index.html>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/>

<http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/>

<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/school/>

National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID)

<http://www3.niaid.nih.gov/>

<http://www3.niaid.nih.gov/topics/Flu/default.htm>

United States Department of Agriculture

<http://www.usda.gov>

http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/!ut/p/s.7.0.A/7.0.1OB?navid=AVIAN_INFLUENZA

<http://www.aphis.usda.gov/>

Federal Drug Administration (FDA)

<http://www.fda.gov>

<http://www.fda.gov/ForConsumers/ConsumerUpdates/ucm092805.htm>

State Government

New Jersey Department of Health and Human Services

<http://www.state.nj.us/health/>

<http://www.state.nj.us/health/flu/index.shtml>

<http://www.state.nj.us/health/flu/generalinfo.shtml>

<http://www.state.nj.us/health/training/panflu/index.shtml>

<http://www.nj.gov/health/er/h1n1/>

http://www.state.nj.us/health/flu/documents/flu_guide.pdf

New Jersey Learning Management Network

Pandemic Influenza Toolkit

<https://njlmn.rutgers.edu/jsp/rlm/panflu.jsp#indfam>

New Jersey Department of Agriculture

<http://www.state.nj.us/agriculture/>

http://www.nj.gov/agriculture/divisions/ah/diseases/avian_influenza.html

New Jersey Office of Emergency Management

<http://www.ready.nj.gov/>

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